

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15 CIAE-00

COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01

IO-14 DRC-01 (ISO) W

----- 033762

R 181734Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6556

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SF, UK, ICFTU

SUBJECT: TUC DELEGATION ISSUES REPORT ON SOUTH AFRICA

REF: LONDON 13070

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: (UNCLASSIFIED) THE TUC DELEGATION WHICH VISITED SOUTH AFRICA (REFTEL) OCTOBER 6-20 HAS JUST RELEASED THE REPORT OF ITS MISSION AND ITS RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE TUC GENERAL COUNCIL FOR FURTHER ACTION. REPORT CRITICIZES BOTH WHITE EMPLOYERS AND WHITE TRADE UNIONS FOR THEIR FAILURE TO TAKE STEPS WHICH WOULD LEAD TO FREE TRADE UNION RIGHTS FOR BLACK WORKERS. IT ALSO MAKES SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR TUC AND ICFTU ACTION TO HELP BLACK WORKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA. (FULL TEXT OF REPORT BEING POUCHED.) END SUMMARY

2. THE DELEGATION WAS LED BY VICTOR FEATHER, FORMER TUC GENERAL SECRETARY AND INCLUDED JACK JONES, CHAIRMAN OF THE TUC INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE; CYRIL PLANT AND
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D. MCGARVEY, MEMBERS OF THE TUC GENERAL COUNCIL; AND

ALLEN HARGREAVES, HEAD OF THE TUC INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT.

3. THE 33-PAGE REPORT EMPHASIZES THAT THE SHARPEST FORM OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST BLACK WORKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA IS THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE THE RIGHT "TO OPERATE AND ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF TRADE UNIONISM" DESPITE THE FACT THAT THEY COMPRISE AT LEAST 60 PERCENT OF THE ACTIVE LABOR FORCE. THE DELEGATION ACKNOWLEDGES THAT THERE HAS BEEN SOME EFFORT ON THE PART OF WHITE TRADE UNION LEADERS AND EMPLOYERS TO REMOVE LEGAL RESTRICTIONS "WHICH STOOD IN THE WAY OF THE BEST POSSIBLE DEPLOYMENT OF LABOR FOR THE PURPOSE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT."

4. HOWEVER, IT DECLARED THAT EMPLOYERS LACK "THE WILL AND COURAGE" EITHER TO INFLUENCE THE GOVERNMENT TO CHANGE ITS POLICIES OR TO ENCOURAGE AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS. IT CALLED ON BRITISH, AMERICAN AND GERMAN FIRMS TO TAKE THE LEAD "IN ENCOURAGING UNIONS." IT ALSO CHASTISED WHITE UNION LEADERS WHO "CLAIMED TO FAVOR THE CREATING OF AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS BUT HAVE DONE VERY LITTLE EFFECTIVE WORK TO FURTHER THEM."

5. AMONG ITS RECOMMENDATIONS, THE GROUP PROPOSED CONTINUED OPPOSITION TO BRITISH INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA UNLESS "FIRMS IN SOUTH AFRICA SHOW IN A PRACTICAL WAY THAT THEY ARE ENCOURAGING AND RECOGNIZING GENUINELY INDEPENDENT TRADE UNIONS FOR BLACK AFRICAN WORKERS."

6. IT CALLED ON THE TUC GENERAL COUNCIL TO "DECLARE FIRMLY AGAINST THE EMIGRATION OF WHITE WORKERS TO SOUTH AFRICA IN VIEW OF THE AVAILABILITY OF BLACK WORKERS FOR EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING."

7. IT URGED THE ICFTU AND THE TUC TO "ESTABLISH A FOCAL POINT IN SOUTH AFRICA TO PLAN AND ASSIST ON A MASSIVE SCALE THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN WORKERS INTO TRADE UNIONS." (A RELATED OBJECT WOULD BE TO PROVIDE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUFFICIENT FUNDS FOR FULL-TIME BLACK ORGANIZERS IN SEVERAL INDUSTRIAL CENTERS.)

8. IT RECOMMENDED THAT THE ICFTU AND THE TUC SET UP A LONDON-BASED COMMITTEE "TO MOBILIZE MAXIMUM INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR AFRICAN TRADE UNION ORGANIZATION IN SOUTH AFRICA;" WITH A FUND OF ABOUT 100,000 POUNDS. IT URGED APPEALS TO THE WORLD TRADE UNION MOVEMENT,

INDIVIDUALS, AND TO ORGANIZATIONS IN SEVERAL COUNTRIES.
THESE FUNDS, ACCORDING TO THE DELEGATION, WOULD BE
USED IN PART TO HELP PROVIDE ORGANIZATIONAL AND
EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE, LEGAL DEFENSE "AGAINST POLICE
REPRESSION," STRIKE PAY, AND TO HELP WORKERS VICTIMIZED
BECAUSE OF TRADE UNION WORK. (END UNCLASSIFIED)

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9. COMMENT: (BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) UNDERLYING
THE REPORT IS A PRAGMATIC ACCEPTANCE OF SEPARATE
BLACK UNIONS AT THIS STAGE OF TRADE UNION DEVELOPMENT
IN AFRICA. MOST MEMBERS OF THE TUC GENERAL COUNCIL
ACCEPT THIS PREMISE INCLUDING JACK JONES, THE LEFT-
WING CHAIRMAN OF THE TUC INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE.
A MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION, CYRIL PLANT, TOLD US THAT
"WE (THE TUC) WOULD NEVER BE ABLE TO GET ANYWHERE IN
SOUTH AFRICA UNLESS WE ACCEPTED THE NOTION OF SEPARATE
BLACK UNIONS. PLANT THINKS THAT THERE IS A GROWING
REALIZATION IN SOUTH AFRICA BY EMPLOYERS AND WHITE
UNION LEADERS THAT UNLESS THE BLACKS ARE GIVEN A

BETTER DEAL, IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO AVOID A "TREMENDOUS EXPLOSION" ULTIMATELY, AND THAT, IN ANY CASE, IT MAY BE TOO LATE. ON THE OTHER HAND, A FEW LEFT-WING TUC LEADERS, SUCH AS HUGH SCANLON, ARE OPPOSED TO RECOGNITION OF APARTHEID IN ANY SHAPE OR FORM AND ARE NOT PERSUADED BY PRACTICAL ARGUMENTS. (END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

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10. (BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED) ALL THE PROPOSALS MADE BY THE DELEGATION WILL HAVE TO BE APPROVED BY THE GENERAL COUNCIL. IT IS LIKELY THE COUNCIL WILL AGREE IN BROAD TERMS TO ITS RECOMMENDATION. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER A FUND THE SIZE OF 100,000 POUNDS WILL BE ESTABLISHED, ALTHOUGH IT IS EXPECTED THAT BOTH THE TUC AND THE ICFTU WILL PROVIDE AT LEAST SOME FUNDS TO ASSIST BLACK WORKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA. (END UNCLASSIFIED)

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